

**Asheville Multimodal Transportation Commission**  
**2013 Annual Report**  
**January 2014**

The City of Asheville's Multimodal Transportation Commission is newly formed, having been established by an ordinance adopted May 14, 2013. The Commission's first meeting was August 28, 2013. Accordingly, much of the Commission's capacity in 2013 was devoted to organizational management. To that end, the Commission:

- Introduced members to each other, including a description of each member's background, interest in serving, and what he or she brings to the Commission; from this, we learned that the Commission is a highly diverse group, including planners, landscape architects, lawyers, transit riders, cyclists and pedestrians, business interests, public health professionals, and others.
- Elected Jim Grode as Chair and Bruce Emory as Vice-Chair.
- Set a regular meeting schedule for the fourth Wednesday of each month from 3:00 to 4:30 pm.
- Reconstituted the former Transit and Greenway Commissions as Committees of the Multimodal Transportation Commission and formally reappointed all current members to those Committees.
- Articulated the Commission's perception of its purpose and role:

To assist the City in furthering, advancing and promoting a broad comprehensive and integrative transportation system that incorporates multimodal concepts, including but not limited to transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, greenways, complete streets, and highways.
- Adopted Bylaws and made substantial progress on Rules of Procedure (which were adopted at our January 2014 meeting).

In addition to these procedural and management activities, the Commission had several substantive achievements during its short existence:

- Voted to approve updates to the City's Greenway Master Plan to include additional potential greenway segments identified after the adoption of the 2009 Master Plan, better articulate the system's network functions, and clarify greenway opportunities in the I-26 corridor in anticipation of the Connector project and other highway upgrades.
- Commission members participated in the Haywood Road Form-Based Code Charrette process and provided input on transportation aspects of the code.

- In October, Commission members attended the Festival of Neighborhoods; this accomplished two functions: providing information about multimodal transportation opportunities to the public, and learning from neighborhood representatives about their multimodal transportation needs and desires.
- Remaining mindful of the need to avoid potential conflicts of interest, Commission members sat on the evaluation committee for proposals for the new Multimodal Transportation Plan.
- Reviewed and commented on a presentation concerning the East of the Riverway Transportation Network.
- Reviewed and approved a list of funding priorities for implementation of the Transit Master Plan.
- Commission members participated in the I-26 Connector Bicycle-Pedestrian Workshop convened by NCDOT in September.
- Voted on the permanent closure of one right of way.

During the first half of the year, the Transit and Greenway Commissions existed as independent Commissions. In the second half of the year, they continued to exist as Committees of the Multimodal Transportation Commission, and the city's Bicycle-Pedestrian Task Force was brought under the umbrella of the Commission. The Committees and Task Force have prepared reports of their 2013 activities, which are attached to this report.

The members of the Multimodal Transportation Commission understand that City Council faces many competing demands for resources. We appreciate Council's recognition that a comprehensive and functional multimodal transportation network provides economic, health, quality of life, and environmental benefits to the City and thank Council for its commitment to developing such a network. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve on the Commission.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Grode, Chair  
 Marcia Bromberg  
 Lothar Dohse  
 Lael Gray (ex-officio)  
 Terri March  
 Bob Roepnack (ex-officio)

Bruce Emory, Vice-Chair  
 Christy Carter (ex-officio)  
 Itiyopiya Ewert  
 Don Kostelec  
 Julie Mayfield  
 Mary Weber

## **Asheville Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force 2013 Annual Report**

### **Vision**

For Asheville to be a community of connected pathways that is healthy, safe and accessible for people of all ages.

### **Mission**

To educate the public about bicycle and pedestrian transportation. To advocate for the development and maintenance of safe, convenient and inter-connected facilities. To promote the benefits of walking and biking for individuals and community health.

### **Ongoing Activities, Collaborations and Projects.**

In each of the listed items the Bike-Ped Task Force (or members from this group) played a role in facilitating the activity by providing leadership, feedback and/or volunteers.

- **“Walk Friendly Community” Project**
  - Applied for the “Walk Friendly Community” designation. Asheville was awarded the Silver-Designation making Asheville the first silver level community in NC.
- **“Bike Friendly Community” Project update (Awarded the Bronze-Level in 2012.)**
  - Reviewed feedback and suggested improvement. (See next item for specifics.)
- **“Bike There 2016” Campaign (Preparation for the National Cyclo-cross Competition)**
  - Hosted two workshops to gain community input on Asheville’s primary bicycle corridors.
  - Developed GIS maps of the primary corridors for Asheville.
- **Asheville Police Department Collaborations**
  - Arranged for merchants to donate bike lights to the APD to give to cyclists in need of lights.
  - Provided feedback to APD’s crash reduction initiative.
  - Provided volunteers for 3 Bike Rodeos held at diverse Asheville locations serving 125 kids.
- **Community Outreach**
  - Provided volunteers and feedback for Strive-not-to-drive Week, May 12 -18.
  - Collaborated with Asheville on Bikes to have successful Bicycle Corrals. Approximately 2,400 bikes were parked in the corrals in 2013.
- **Complete Street Initiatives**
  - Provided volunteers and feedback to install way finding signs for bicycles.
  - Helped organize Complete Street Work shop. Approximately 20 attended including several task force members.
  - Participated in “Best Practices Workshop” at Minneapolis, MN on June 15<sup>th</sup>. (Several members including a city council member and city staff attended.)
  - Participated in the NC Bike Summit in Carrboro, NC on Oct 18-19. (6 members attended.)

- Provided input and feedback into the implementation of safe bike routes.
- Provided input to the French Broad Metropolitan Planning Organization. Members sit on the MPO's Complete Street Sub-Committee.
- **Assessment**
  - Conducted Annual bike survey during first week of September with help from UNCA volunteers.

Respectfully submitted by Lothar Dohse

Additional Contributors:

Janet Barlow  
Don Kostelec  
Liz McLamb  
Claudia Nix  
Lyuba Zuyeva

Kris Hinz  
Terri March  
Barb Mee  
Mike Sule

## **Asheville Greenway Committee 2013 Annual Report**

2013 was a watershed year for the Asheville Greenway Commission (now Greenway Committee). In the previous year the Commission changed its primary staff contact from the Parks and Recreation Department to the Transportation Department, recognizing the broader role of greenways as part of a multi-modal transportation system. At a 2012 planning workshop the Commission identified a multi-modal transportation plan as its highest priority. Taking into account the Greenway Commission's suggestions along with those from other quarters the City Council created the Multi-Modal Transportation Commission, charged with taking a leadership role in creating and implementing the multi-modal transportation master plan. A third of the voting members of the new Commission come from the Greenway Committee.

During the year the Committee engaged in the following activities:

- Held a planning session which included:
  - Discussion of the Greenway Commission's role in the proposed Multi-Model Transportation Commission;
  - Prioritization of future greenway projects for feasibility studies (Swannanoa River from Tunnel Rd. to BRP, Beaverdam Road, Reed Creek to 251 north, Canie Creek and Smith Mill Creek);
  - Recommended that the Greenway Committee have representation on the Parks and Recreation Commission to reinforce the health and recreation role of greenways; and
  - Nominated Jim Grode, Mary Weber and Marcia Bromberg as the Greenway representatives to the new Commission.
- Continued community outreach by participating in various community forums and addressing interested community groups.
- Submitted a position to DOT on the planned improvements to the Brevard Road/I-26 interchange that would allow greenway connection to Bent Creek, the Pisgah National Forest and the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- Received and monitored updates on Beaucatcher Greenway Construction and the Clingman Forest/Town Branch Greenways planning.
- Reviewed several road closure proposals. (In the future these will be reviewed by the Multi-Modal Transportation Commission).
- Reviewed and commented on transportation projects presented by Transportation Department staff.
- Commented on the updated Asheville Greenway Master Plan.
- Received information about the Burton Street Community Plan and Hominy Creek Greenway plans; scheduled a visit to the Burton Street neighborhood and Hominy Creek Greenway in February.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sue Barlow, Chair  
Marcia Bromberg

Ally Donlan, Vice Chair  
Jim Grode

Bryan Mitchell, Secretary  
Stephen Jones

Mary Weber

## **Asheville Transit Committee 2013 Annual Report**

In 2013 the Transit Committee continued its support of the implementation of the Transit Master Plan (TMP).

### **TMP Implementation**

#### *1. Completed Projects from the Transit Master Plan*

Projects that were completed in 2013 include:

- E1 Additional service
- Time and small route adjustments to improve performance
- Added limited holiday service on key routes for New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup> and Labor Day.
- Purchased several additional new 30-foot Buses and 2 35-foot used buses. Fleet total is now 23.
- Installed 10 Shelters
- Repairs made to the Maintenance Facility roof
- Improved bus-stop signage
- Two surveys: a boarding & alighting count as part of MPO's modeling study; and a TMP implementation follow up survey done in partnership with Just Economics
- Let the contract for the Automated Vehicle Location system which will let riders track buses in real time on their cellphones.

### **Transit Commission Goals**

For 2013, the TC had the following goals:

#### *1. Continued Transit Master Plan Implementation (also see above)*

- We continue to look to expand service through growing public-private partnerships i.e. Health Express (MAHEC and Mission), Biltmore Park-Sierra Nevada-WCU, and AB Tech. None of these has resulted in a new partnership, but discussions are ongoing with MAHEC and AB Tech.
- The N1 runs later Thursday through Saturday (while school is in session) thanks to UNCA.
- Green Opportunities became part of the Passport Program, joining existing members Buncombe County, the City of Asheville, the Grove Park Inn, and UNCA.

#### *2. Strengthen Communication with Drivers*

- Regular meetings between the drivers, City staff, and TC members continue and provide a good opportunity for all parties to collaborate on resolving issues and differences.

### 3. Improve the Rider Experience

- We continued ongoing rider education and information, hosting information tables at the Vanderbilt Apartments, Battery Park Apartments, Catholic Social Services, and other locations.
- We have researched options for effective messages on rider etiquette but have not moved toward implementation yet.
- The TC voted to keep the ART station open until 10:00pm with a dispatcher and police officer there to provide greater security and safety for riders.
- Strive Not To Drive was utilized as an outreach opportunity to help people get better acquainted with how to navigate our transit system. An information table staffed by TC members was available to provide information.

### 4. Improve Coordination with Buncombe County

- We lost our Buncombe County representative and so have not moved forward on this goal.

### Other 2013 Highlights

- Public Stuff became the new way to lodge and track complaints
- TC joined the Multimodal Transportation Commission
- We met with Council to advocate funding for implementation of additional improvements from the TMP, including Sunday service, an additional bus on the C and S3 routes, and improvements to the S4 route.

### Anticipated in 2014

- We will have at least four new members in 2014 due to the resignation of Kevin Jenkins and Larnel (Lonnie) Blair, and the MMTTC approved a request to have more members on the TC. At least three of the four new members are transit-dependent riders.
- We very much hope Council will fund limited Sunday service in which buses will run on Sundays using a holiday schedule.
- Implementation of the AVL system.
- We also hope to improve the service on the C route so that riders' connections are more efficient.
- We look to continue to improve in our marketing and communications materials.
- Continued public outreach so that riders and potential riders are more informed.

We thank the Multi-Modal Transportation Commission for its support of ART, and we look forward to our continued collaboration with you in improving this vital element of the City's infrastructure.

Respectfully submitted,  
2014 City of Asheville Transit Committee  
Julie Mayfield, Chair  
Bruce Emory  
Tom Tomlin

Dave Erb, Vice Chair  
Itiyopiya Ewart